

Expansions on the Book of Romans

Introduction

This document follows in what has evolved over the years as a series of expansions on books from the Bible. It shouldn't be taken of as a commentary nor as a series of reflections in order to provide information, even inspiration. Instead, the text follows the ancient practice of *lectio divina*, that slow, meditative reading of sacred scripture. Here the reader takes his or her time with the text, focusing upon a word or two or at most, a given phrase. One can abide with this word or text as long as one wishes without the imposition of any time limit. The purpose is not to inform but to dispose oneself to resting in an awareness of God's presence. *Without this intent the document at hand is completely useless.*

The word "expansions" is used deliberately because it implies taking a certain liberty, consciously so, in fleshing out Romans in the spirit of *lectio divina*. This notion of expanding upon a text to a large extent centers around the importance of prepositions in Greek, including those prefaced to verbs and nouns. The dynamic nature of prepositions—up, down, in, out and so forth—makes reading the text an exciting experience which is difficult to convey in translation. The best part, of course, is that it's well suited for helping to bring you into the presence of God.

One important point that cannot be overlooked is the way Paul borrows Old Testament passages or phrases. Obviously they are loaded and are meant to be taken as a whole. For that reason each such verse is given in detail, enabling a fuller appreciation of the point Paul is attempting to make. At the end of the document is a list of all these quotes. When strung together as a whole, they given a unique insight into Paul's Jewishness and his relatively new role as apostle of Jesus Christ.

I had some hesitations about expanding upon Romans by reason of its history throughout Christianity, notably because of the after-effects of the Reformation. In addition to how the Reformers interpreted the text, we have countless commentaries, homilies and the like. You'd think all this would exhaust the book. It does so from the informational point of view, even as it relates to teaching and preaching, but not from doing *lectio*. Overcoming resistance to the cultural baggage of Romans took some time. In the end, the best way turned out to dive in and simply do *lectio divina* as just described, the document here being a report of what had happened.

As with all "expansion" texts to date, the English translation is from the **New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha (RSV)**, 1973. Also the **NIV Study Bible** (Grand

Rapids, MI, 2002) has been consulted. The Greek text used is **The Greek New Testament** edited by Aland, Black, Martini, Metzger and Wikgren (Stuttgart, 1968).

References to Greek terms are transliterated. Often a similar biblical reference is noted, preferably within Romans itself. If that is not available, sometimes another reference in Paul's epistles is given; if not that, then the gospels and epistles from the other apostles. In some instances part of a verse is given simply for the sake of brevity. These references enable both a forward and backward search to see similarities, that is, if there are any. Any word not in Romans is most likely from another of Paul's epistles.

Each verse is prefaced with reference to the chapter for easier identification when searching for a term or the like. On numerous occasions several verses are combined: some because they are short and others because they form one unit, if you will.

Romans contains numerous rhetorical questions which also are posted, a small way of shedding light into the way Paul addresses his audience which, it should be kept in mind, he has not met; in other words, he is communicating (most likely from Corinth) with those at Rome. These questions also reveal the somewhat hyper-tense attitude of Paul plus one of the ways he handles his those either reading or listening to his letter.

Note that throughout Romans Paul uses two forms of the proper name, Jesus Christ and Christ Jesus. Being aware of which in a given context helps give insight into how Paul perceives him. The two groupings are as follows:

Jesus Christ: 1.4, 4, 7, 8; 3.22, 5.1, 15, 17, 21; 7.25, 13.14, 15.15, 30; 16.20, 25, 27.
Christ Jesus: 2.16; 3.24; 6.11, 23; 8.1, 2, 11, 34, 39; 15.5, 16, 17; 16.3.

Chapter One

1-Vs. 1: Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God

Vs. 1 opens an extended sentence, if you will, running through vs. 8 (vs. 7 ending with a colon), not entirely uncommon in Romans as well as in other Epistles.

Romans begins straightaway with Paul mentioning his own name so as to make sure his listeners knew it was coming from him and from no one else. No biographical introduction is needed—people knew about Paul's earlier career of persecuting the budding Christian community—this being secondary to the theme of Romans, the person of Jesus Christ. As

for these listeners, Chapter Sixteen has a list of some thirty-four individuals meaning that if Paul didn't know them personally, he knew their names. Even more profoundly, ignorance of fellow Christians at a distance proves no barrier to communion with them.

Paul is eager to get his name out among his audience as being subordinate to Jesus Christ which takes the form of a servant or *doulos*...more a slave...a condition familiar to everyone at the time, so much so that barely it was given a thought. However, Paul shifts the subjugated nature of this *doulos* condition not to a human master but to Jesus Christ. The idea is that Jesus is not unlike master of a household, a *despotes*. As for *doulos* it occurs next in 6.16: "Do you not know that if you yield yourselves to any one as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin which leads to death, or of obedience which leads to righteousness?"

Paul elaborates upon himself as a *doulos*, that is, identifying his servile condition with an *apostolos*, apostle, one who is sent as on a mission. "Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry" [11.13]. Thus we have Paul as a *doulos* as well as an *apostolos* under the authority of *despotes*, a word not found in Romans. The *despotes* or Jesus Christ trusts an *apostolos* well enough to leave the household on business without running away or taking advantage of his position. In other words, he was a mature person who could perform his duty without constant supervision. Furthermore, *doulos* is dubbed *kletos* or called which means to be invoked or summoned. "Including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ" [vs. 6]. Of course, this refers to Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus recounted in Chapter Nine of Acts though the actual words of Jesus (cf. vs. 5) don't call him an apostle but instead lets his future role to be known by those in Damascus (cf. vs. 6).

The verb *aphorizo* for set apart means to mark off (*apo-* for *aph-*, from prefaced to *horizo*, to set a boundary). It lacks a definite article which can be taken as a lack of identity not in the negative sense but at the service of the person (Jesus Christ) to whom it is applied. "But when he who had set me apart before I was born and had called me through is grace" [Gal 1.18]. While the proposition *apo-* signifies separation or a going away from, the other preposition used with it is *eis*, going in the opposition direction or literally into. In sum we have a setting-from which passes into, or to use the prepositions again, *apo* -> *eis*.

Here *eis* pertains to *euaggelion* (cf. vs. 9) or gospel (good news). This good news is in contrast to "bad news," if you will, something people were all too familiar with. What makes *euaggelion* even better is its association with God making such good news continuously fresh but also not novel. As for the transmission of news, good or bad, often it was done by someone like a herald who read it aloud in a city square or the like.

1-Vs. 2: which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures,

In the same breath where he mentions Jesus Christ, Paul speaks of the gospel the two being indistinguishable. Aware that he's addressing a largely Jewish audience, he situates this "good news" in the grand tradition of Israel's prophets. Note, however, that he doesn't include Abraham, Moses, the patriarchs, the judges and King David. Nevertheless, such good news is promised beforehand or *proepaggello* which consists of two prepositions prefaced to the verbal root *aggello*, *pro* and *epi* or before and upon. This makes the verb read literally as "announce before upon." It has one other biblical reference: "So I thought it necessary to urge the brethren to go on to you before me and arrange in advance for this gift you have promised so that it may be ready not as an exaction but as a willing gift."

Paul presupposes that his listeners are familiar with the prophets being attentive, if you will, to the just mentioned combination of *pro* and *epi* or before and upon relative to *aggello* or the act of proclaiming. So attention focuses upon announcing a person who embodies both *pro* and *epi*. That is to say, the former can apply to the idea of someone who had pre-existed and the latter to his exercise of lordship, of being over or upon. That should assist in narrowing the field more quickly than reading each prophet with the intent of discovering something esoteric or not proper to Jewish religious tradition.

The words "in the holy scriptures" are a further way of safeguarding and being rooted in that tradition. Hopefully the reader will focus upon Isaiah's suffering servant not unlike the Ethiopian eunuch who was reading about this person and didn't understand until he had met the apostle Philip. Acts 8.34 puts this well, applicable to the situation at hand: "About whom does the prophet say this, about himself or about some one else?"

1-Vs. 3: the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh

The Greek text lacks "gospel" but is presumed from vs. 1, the prophets who are sandwiched in between mention of the two, as it were, in the previous verse. Compared to vs. 1 where we have "the gospel of God," here we have "(the gospel) concerning (*peri*) his Son" or Jesus Christ which is more specific. Thus the two—God and Jesus Christ—are one and the same and are interchangeable as far as the gospel is concerned.

Now Paul gets more specific as to the *euaggelion* which is not composed by Jesus nor handed down by him but by those acquainted with him, especially his disciples. He claims that Jesus is a direct descendant of King David (note his omission as discussed in vs. 2

relative to the prophets) or according to the Greek text, “from the seed of David.” Paul has something in mind not unlike the genealogy of Matthew’s Gospel which doesn’t start with David but with Abraham. However, David is singled out by reason of being Israel’s most famous king, a prototype or forerunner of Jesus Christ as well as associated with being the author of many Psalms.

Paul adds “according (*kata*) to the flesh (*sarx*)” which situates Jesus Christ in the kingly line of David which would make reception of him more palatable to his audience.

1-Vs. 4: and designated Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord,

The previous verse has “the gospel according to his Son” whereas here we have “designated Son of God” which is more striking, putting Jesus Christ on the same level as God. The verb is *horizo* meaning to mark out as a boundary as noted in vs. 1 with respect to *aphorizo* (to set apart). “This Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God” [Acts 2.23]. Such bounding, if you will, is governed by the operation of two prepositions, *en* and *kata* or in and according to. The former pertains to power or *dunamis*, a wide ranging term involving authority and the capacity to do (or not to do) something. “It (gospel) is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith” [vs. 16]. *Dunamis* belongs to the Son of God where this designating or *horizo* reflects Ps 110.1 as quoted, for example, in Mt 22.44.

The act of *horizo* done by the Father isn’t random or willy-nilly. Rather, the preposition *kata* or according to represents the governing principle not just of the Spirit (*Pneuma*: also means breath) but as the one who possesses holiness (*hagiosune*) relative to Jesus’ resurrection. A reference to the former: “Never flag in zeal, be aglow with the Spirit, serve the Lord” [12.11]. And the latter has two other biblical references, 2Cor 7.1 and 1Ths 3.13, the second being cited here: “so that he may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before our God and Father.”

1-Vs. 5: through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations,

The small preposition *dia* (through) is important in that it reveals the role of mediation by Jesus Christ. What it effects through him is reception (*lambano* is the common word for this) of grace and apostleship or *charis* and *apostole*. The former translates as favor and kind feeling towards someone. The latter is the office or role of apostleship which hearkens back to the twelve, Paul being an addition to that membership. *Charis* is found next in vs. 7: “grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” *Apostole* has

three other biblical references, one being 1Cor 9.2: “for you are the deal of my apostleship in the Lord.”

Apostole is bound up with *charis* and imitative of the original twelve apostles who had been with Jesus, some of whom were currently at work in other places even though we have no word here of their activity. *Apostole* is thus directed to or *eis* (into) *hupakoe* or obedience as it pertains to faith, this word meaning literally a listening-from under (*hupo-*). So *eis* represents full attentiveness through listening and a response through faith which essentially means subordinating one’s faculties so that they do not interfere with this listening-under. “So by one man’s obedience many will be made righteous” [5.19].

The *eis* or into relative to *hupakoe* is followed immediately by its practical application, namely, *en* or “in all nations” or where such *hupakoe* is to take up its residence. It has a specific goal, namely, to make the name of Jesus Christ present *en* these nations which intimates their collective memory or in the way each nation preserves recollection of its identity.

1-Vs. 6: including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ;

By using such words as “including yourselves” (the conjunctive *kai* or and) Paul intimates that the Romans whom he’s addressing will be numbered among the nations mentioned in the previous verse and will assume a central role to effect the *hupakoe*...the listening-under...relative to faith. And so these Romans, the “you” at hand, are called *kletos* not unlike Paul himself where this word applies to him.

1-Vs. 7: To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul concludes the lengthy sentence which begins in vs. 1 by addressing directly his audience, “all” perhaps including Jews and Christians. Despite their distinction, both are *agapetos* (cf. 11.28) or beloved, this word being derived from *agape*. The former was much larger and the latter not only smaller but new to the capitol. Regardless, to both the adjective *kletos* or called is applied, suggesting that they didn’t achieve special status in God’s eyes on their own but by divine choice. Concurrent with *kletos*, if you will, is the other adjective *hagios* translated as saints or those who are holy, set apart, this word being related to *hagiosune* (“holiness”) in vs. 4. “ [8.27].

Not untypically Paul uses a conventional greeting of *charis* (cf. vs. 5) and *eirene*, grace and peace linked with God the Father and Jesus Christ. By this simple acknowledgment of the basic tenet of Christian faith (compared with Judaism, for example), Paul demonstrated

that he no stranger to them. As for *eirene*, the next reference is 2.10: “but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good.”

1-Vs. 8: First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world.

The neuter *proton* isn't first in terms of a numerical sequence. Rather, it shows that Paul makes sure the Romans are his highest priority and wishes to reassure them that such is the case. United with this *proton* is the verb *eucharisteo* or thank, *eu-* prefaced to the verbal root *charizo* (to do something agreeable) which intimates well-ness, the adverbial form of *agathos* (good). Such giving thanks is directed not just to God (dative case) but through Jesus Christ, the preposition *dia* suggestive of Paul's insight into Jesus' mediating role.

Hoti or because is the motive behind this *eucharisteo* which is bound to the Romans' *pistis* or faith found last in vs. 5 but not noted there. Such faith isn't localized within Rome. Rather, it has spread throughout (*en* or *in*) the “world” or *kosmos* which also means order, decoration as well as firmament.

The notion of proclaiming faith (*kataggello*) has special meaning: the preposition *kata* (also means down) prefaced to the verb implies proclaiming in accord with a pattern of preconceived idea.

1-Vs. 9: For God is my witness whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I mention you always in my prayers,

The verse at hand begins a lengthy sentence running through vs. 13.

Paul calls God his witness or *martus*, the only use of this word in Romans which in this instance is equivalent to being a chosen instrument or a *skeuos* (an implement of any kind) which is *ekoge* or literally an “instrument of choice.” This phrase from Acts 9.15 is singled out because it takes place shortly after Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus. The Lord himself uses it when addressing Ananias who balked at the prospect of receiving a notorious persecutor of the early church even though the Lord himself had commanded him to accept him. For another similar reference to *martus*, cf. Phil 1.8: “For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Jesus Christ.”

Related to this *martus* is the notion of serving or *latreuo* which connotes working for hire or for pay...in other words, not for free. For another sense of *latreuo* which here connotes devotion, cf. Phil 3.3: “For we are the true circumcision who worship God in spirit.” Note

the double use of the preposition *en* (in), if you will, relative to spirit (*pneuma*: cf. 1.4) and gospel, reading literally “in my spirit in the gospel.” “Of his Son” is added to which Paul’s *pneuma* is attached. Thus *en* serves to unite Paul’s *pneuma* with the gospel, the two being one and the same as that “instrument of choice.”

Right away Paul shifts attention to those whom he’s addressing, using the adverb *dialeiptos* or without ceasing which consists of the verbal root *leipo* (to leave behind) prefaced with the preposition *dia* (through) and the negative, alpha privative. It could read literally as “not left behind through.” In other words, *dialeiptos* suggests a thorough passing through where no stone is left unturned. “We give thanks to God always for you all, constantly mentioning you in our prayers” [1Ths 1.2]. Both verses use *mneia* which means remembrance, implying commemoration and reading literally “making remembrance.” The common verb *poieo* (to make) suggests an active element in this remembrance, not a simple recollection of those whom Paul is addressing.

1-Vs. 10: asking that somehow by God's will I may now at last succeed in coming to you.

The Greek text has “always in my prayers” contained within the verse at hand compared with vs. 9. *Pantote* consists of *pan* and *tote* or always and at times. *Proseuche* is the noun for prayers which has the root *euche* or prayer (*eu-* an adverbial form suggesting well-ness) prefaced with the preposition *pros* signifying direction towards-which, thus imparting a dynamic, sense of forward-ness. “I appeal to you, brethren...to strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf” [15.30]. The verse at hand has *proseuche* prefaced with the preposition *epi* (upon) or “upon my prayers” indicative that the remembrance or *mneia* of vs. 9 is weighing upon Paul, as it were, though not necessarily in a burdensome fashion.

Deo is the common verb for asking and can apply to being in want or need used with *ei pos* or somehow, literally “if how” and suggests that Paul may not be able to reach Rome. Nevertheless, he hopes to succeed, conditioned by *ede pote* (already sometime), the verb *euodoo* literally as to cause one’s journey (*hodeuo*) to come off well (*eu-*). It has two other biblical references, 1Cor 16.2 and 3Jn 2, the former being cited here: “Each of you is to put something aside and store it up as he may prosper.” The common verb *erchomai* (coming) is used with the preposition *pros* you or in your direction as implied with *proseuche*.

1-Vs. 11: For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you,

Paul's desire is intensified by the preposition *epi* prefaced to the verb meaning to long, that is, he has a desire-upon or *epiotheo*, the preposition *epi-* or upon, if it could be this way. "Here indeed we groan and long to put on our heavenly dwelling" [2Cor 5.2]. Although it's possible that he may not see those in Rome, the tone of the epistle this early on makes it as though Paul already was present, given the strength of his faith in Jesus Christ which is also applicable to his listeners, therefore binding them across space and time.

This longing-upon concerns the verb *metadidomai* or impart which has the preposition *meta* prefaced to the verbal root and comes across as to give-with. "He who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality" [12.8]. Paul wishes to impart in person a gift which is spiritual or a *charisma* which is *pneumatikos*. The former applies to a favor without any merit and the adjective it describes ultimately derives from the Holy Spirit or *Pneuma*. Two references: "But the gift is not like the trespass" [5.15] and "We know that the law is spiritual" [7.14].

Sterizo as strengthen means to make fast, prop up, the idea being to establish and not be moved. It's prefaced with the preposition *eis* or into, thus reading "into the strengthening." "Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel" [16.25].

1-Vs. 12: that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine.

Despite not being present with those whom he's addressing, Paul is aware of the mutual bond mentioned above which transcends the limitations of space and time. He has this in mind when speaking of the faith or *pistis* (cf. vs. 8) belonging both to him and the Romans. Also he puts awareness of this bond in terms of mutual encouragement, the verb being *sumparakaleo* where the root *kaleo* (to call, summon) is prefaced with two prepositions, *sum-* and *para-* or with and beside, the latter in the sense of being near but at some distance. So we have a calling which is both with as well as beside. It's the only reference in the New Testament (NT).

Right after *sumparakaleo* the Greek text has the phrase "in you."

1-Vs. 13: I want you to know, brethren, that I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented), in order that I may reap some harvest among you as well as among the rest of the Gentiles.

The Greek text reads literally "I do not wish you to be not knowing," *agnoeo* pertaining to ignorance. "Do you not know that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance" [2.4]? Despite his intention as rendered by the verb *protithemi* or to place before (*pro-*),

Paul couldn't come to Rome. "Since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" [3.23]. The verb *koluo* represents this hindrance, the reason for which isn't given but possibly presumed among those Paul is addressing. "And do not forbid speaking in tongues" [1Cor 14.39].

Paul uses familiar agricultural imagery, that is, he speaks in terms of a harvest "among you" which has the preposition *en* or literally "in you." The common verb *echo* translates here as reap but is rendered "may have." While this harvest pertains directly to the Romans, Paul is quick to add the Gentiles or *enthos* which also means nation and commonly taken as those who are not Israelites. Actually this is the first mention of the term in Romans. "When Gentiles who have not the law do by nature what the law requires, they are a law to themselves" [2.14]. "Rest of" can suggest that originally Paul intended to meet the Jews and the Gentiles associated with them as well as those who are Christians but may not be that closely tied in with the primary audience.

1-Vss. 14 & 15: I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish: 15) so I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

These verses comprise one sentence and deal with those who are "the rest of the Gentiles," namely, Greeks and barbarians (*barbaros*). The latter term seems to refer to those who didn't speak Greek which was used widely throughout the empire, Paul being concerned primarily with those living in Rome. It seems a kind of put-down even if unintended. Compare with the sentiment in Col 3.11: "Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and un-circumcised, barbarian...but Christ is all and in all."

By reason of his road-to-Damascus conversion, Paul has to put aside any preconceptions as a Jew, that is, he is under obligation or *opheiletos*, concerning those whom he's addressing, a noun meaning a debtor. "We are debtors not to the flesh to live according to the flesh" [8.12]. In addition to the Greeks and barbarians, being a debtor includes the wise and foolish which could be a way of categorizing the former pair. *Sophos* and *anoetos* are the adjectives, the former implying anyone who is skilled or cunning and the latter, lacking understanding or lacking *nous* which pertains to the mind and perception. "Claiming to be wise, they became fools" [vs. 22]. "O foolish Galatians" [Gal 3.1]!

The phrase *kat' eme* is rendered literally as "according to me" and associated with *prothumos* or eager, ready or willing. The preposition *pro-* (before) is prefaced to the root *thumos* meaning soul as principle of life. "Tend the flock of God that is your charge, not by constraint but willingly" [1Pt 5.2]. The "you" perhaps are Jews who had become Christians and had to get along with the above mentioned Greeks and barbarians.

1-Vs. 16: For I am not ashamed of the gospel: it is the power of God for salvation to every one who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

Epaischunomai means (not) ashamed, the preposition *epi* (upon) prefaced to the verbal root indicates intensification, not unlike something as “very ashamed.” “What return did you get from the things of which you are now ashamed” [6.21]? In the verse at hand Paul’s lack of *epi*-shame, if you will, pertains to the gospel mentioned in this chapter’s opening verse. Gospel at the time refers to spoken tradition rather than anything written, certainly not in the form we have today. And so the gospel...the good news...spread rapidly from Jerusalem to now those at Rome eager to greet Paul.

So this gospel as the spoken word is the power of God, his *dunamis* (cf. vs. 40) which means influence, authority or the capacity to accomplish something and make it present. In other words, the *dunamis* present within the gospel has of yet to be committed to writing and is subject to further development at the time of this epistle. Note that such *dunamis* has direction, if you will, *eis* or into salvation, *soteria*. “My heart’s desire is that they may be saved (*eis* with the noun)” [10.1]. This salvation which also acts as preservation, an alternate meaning, is for all persons who have faith or *pisteuo*, the verb meaning to believe. “The righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe” [3.22]. Note the order which is in keeping with Romans thus far: in first place is the Jew followed by the Greek; nothing is said of the *barbaros* of vs. 15.

1-Vs. 17: For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, "He who through faith is righteous shall live."

“In it” refers to the gospel which, as noted, was not written down at the time of Paul but still largely an oral tradition or perhaps sayings and information recorded here and there. Thus an important feature to the oral record of Jesus’ words consists of God’s righteousness or *dikaiosune* which means integrity, virtue and purity. “But if your wickedness serves to show the justice of God, what shall we say” [3.5]? Such *dikaiosune* is revealed, *apokalupto* meaning literally to uncover or make bare a reality that had been present all along but needs a catalyst to get it out in the open. The verb is found in the next verse with regard to divine wrath, another reality to be uncovered or to have the veil removed in order to make it known. The preposition *apo-* (from) emphasizes this removing.

As for the removing, the gesture of *apo-*, it is effected literally from-into (*ek-eis*) faith (*pistis*, cf. vs. 12). Note that *apo* signifies away from, apart; *ek* signifies more from-ness, a more direct agency, if you will. Thus faith or trustworthiness allows righteousness to be uncovered in a dynamic fashion, this from-into movement.

To back up this statement, Paul quotes Hab 2.4 which reads in full: “Behold, he whose soul is not upright in him shall fail, but the righteous shall live by his faith.” The Hebrew for *dikaiousune* is ‘*emunah*, that which is trustworthy or certainty and here has the preposition *b-* or *in* prefaced to it, “in faith.” The context is Habakkuk watching upon a tower awaiting the revelation...the *apokalupto*...of a vision. It contrasts in the next verse with a person overcome with wine who becomes greedy.

1-Vs. 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of men who by their wickedness suppress the truth.

Here we have a second revelation, an *apokalupto*, which follows that of the previous verse. It consists of divine wrath or *orge* which can refer to a natural impulse, propensity or agitation of the soul. The uncovering of this *orge* is from heaven meaning from above, neither below nor from the earth, so to perceive it, attention must be focused there. Such *orge* doesn't fall down willy-nilly. Rather, it comes upon two types of men characterized by ungodliness and wickedness or *asebeia* and *adikia*. Among the Romans, *asebeia* is possibly the worst possible offense meaning lack of respect for family, authority and the gods all rolled into one. “He (the Deliverer) will banish ungodliness from Jacob” [11.26]. The second is the exact opposite of *dikaiousune*, coming from the same root and refers to wrongdoing. “They were filled with all manner of wickedness, evil (etc.)” [vs. 29]. Actually Paul's remarks about such people continue through the rest of this chapter, taking up a considerable amount of space.

The two evils of *asebeia* and *adikaia* are embodied in wickedness or *adikaia*. It as though these two combine and become one in the second, *asebeia* being intensified into the lack of *dikaiousune*. The verb *katecho* as suppress suggests a holding down (*kata-*) permanently and not allowing that which is held (*aletheia*, truth) to get up, flattening it out, as it were. “But now we are discharged from the law, dead to that which held us captive” [7.6]. The holding-down or *kata* at work here is intensified by *en* or in wickedness.

1-Vs. 19: For what can be known about God is plain to them because God has shown it to them.

Compare the two words known and plain or *gnostos* and *phaneroo*. Two references are as follows: “As this disciple (Peter) was known to the high priest, he entered the court of the high priest along with Jesus” [Jn 18.15]. “He is a Jew who is one inwardly” [2.28]. *Gnostos* pertains to what is out there already, available to everyone, after which, as it were, comes *phaneros* which connotes a making manifest and requires acting upon evidence of the former.

The “it” at hand is this *gnostos* followed by *phaneros* which, in turn, is followed by the verb for the latter, *phaneroo*. The preposition *en* or in as pertaining to the evil men of the previous verse reads literally as “in them.” This in-ness means what is *phaneros* isn’t external to men, even in their wickedness, but is part of that revelation, that uncovering of *apokalupto*, present in them.

1-Vs. 20: Ever since the creation of the world his invisible nature, namely, his eternal power and deity, has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse;

This verse hearkens back to the repeated evils committed by mankind early on or the time between the Garden of Eden and the flood associated with Noah. Also this theme is in conjunction with the tenor of the last two verses. Despite the correction intended by the flood, the human situation has remained the same which required the incarnation of Jesus Christ to offer a remedy and which continues through the church’s ministry. Paul mentions first God’s *aoratos* or unseen nature, the noun being associated with the adjective. “He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation” [Col 1.15].

Equivalent to this invisibility are power and deity, *dunamis* and *theiotes*, both of which are eternal or *aidios*. The former is a loaded term and in general, refers to inherent power or one that isn’t acquired yet. It is referred to last in vs. 16 concerning the Gospel (again, not yet in written form but oral). The latter occurs only this time in the NT. As for the adjective *aidios*, it has one other reference, Jd 1.6: “Angels...have been kept by him in eternal chains in the nether gloom until the judgment of the great day.”

Despite the invisible nature of both *dunamis* and *theiotes*, they have been perceived clearly, this phrase consisting of two verbs, *noeo* and *kathorao*. The former (present passive) applies to apprehending or perceiving as in Eph 3.4: “When you read this you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ.” The latter has the preposition *kata* prefaced to it, indicative of direction of sight or training it to a certain object thereby making other objects as secondary. And so this directed seeing is an apprehension of God’s *aoratos*, that which can’t be seen. These words related to sight and perception live on the border of visibility-invisibility, switching between the two without making clear-cut distinctions.

Poiema are things that have been made and the source to which *kathorao* (with *noeo*) is directed. The only other reference to this noun is Eph 2.10: “For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works which God prepared beforehand.”

This interplay between visibility and invisibility is so obvious that people are without excuse, *anapologetos*, a legal term meaning having no defense for inexcusable actions. “Therefore you have no excuse” [2.1].

1-Vss. 21-22: for although they knew God they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking and their senseless minds were darkened. 22) Claiming to be wise, they became fools,

Although Paul’s words are directed more specifically to those in Rome, he continues to speak of man’s wickedness begun in vs. 18 and develops it as applicable to the human race as a whole. He may have in mind the widely regarded perception of the capitol’s degenerate life style which has spread throughout the empire. Furthermore, Rome was responsible for oppressing Paul’s homeland of Israel.

Gignosko is the verb for knowing, often applicable to observation, here concerning God in a general background sense where he is reduced to a distant spectator unable to act. “And know his will and approve what is excellent because you are instructed in the law” [2.18]. Once God is taken off the scene or made distant as possible, men are able to act according to their own wickedness while at the same time knowing it is harmful.

Two chief manifestations of this failure to *gignosko* are not honoring and not thanking God, *doxazo* and *eucharisteo*, the latter also meaning to be grateful. Two references: “Those whom he justified he also glorified” [8.30]. “First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world” [1.8].

In place of *doxazo* and *eucharisteo*, the human race tends toward the opposite. First it became futile or *mataioo* which connotes being vain and is the only NT reference. This folly is located within thinking or *dialogismos*, a word implying deliberation or having a purpose and design in mind. The preposition *dia* or through suggests a certain deviousness of thought which translates into making God distant. “As for the man who is weak in faith, welcome him but not for disputes over opinions” [14.1].

The second pertains to minds or *kardia* which more accurately means heart, the vigor and sense of physical life. “Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity” [vs. 24]. Such hearts have become senseless or *asunetos*, literally as without (alpha privative) understanding or having no *suniami* or being-with, *sun-*. “Foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless” [vs, 31]. This lack of being-with, if you will, results in darkness, *skotizo*. “Let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see, and bend their backs forever” [11.10].

Vs. 23 continues into the next one where the adjective *sophos* or being wise applies to being skilled (cf. vs. 15). However, *sophos* here is equivalent to *moraino*, became fools. “Where is the wise man” [1Cor 1.20]? Such is the claim, *phasko* which means to affirm as in Acts 24.9: “The Jews also joined in the charge, affirming that all this was so.”

1-Vs. 23: and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man or birds or animals or reptiles.

Allasso is the verb for exchanged which men did once they were able to distance themselves from the *gignosko* or knowing God noted in vs. 21. “We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed” [1Cor 15.51]. In other words, they did this not all at once but gradually, trying to rid themselves of any memories of divine worship. The object at hand is glory or *doxa*. “To those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality” [2.7]. Such glory belongs to God who is immortal, *aphthartos* or better, incorruptible, this adjective describing the created beings mentioned in the verse at hand. “They (athletes) do it as to receive a perishable wreath but we an imperishable one” [1Cor 9.25].

Eikon or images can be taken as idols set up for worship and block the manifestation of divine glory. “For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son” [8.29]. *Eikon* is used with a similar word, *homoima* or resembling which is a noun. And so an *eikon* is the original, if you will, whereas *homoima* is the reflection of this original. “Even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam” [5.14].

1-Vs. 24: Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves,

Paradidomi or gave up has a juridical element, inferring that God is a judge handing someone over for punishment after a trial. The preposition *para-* connotes beside-ness, of being in the company, here being associated with lust. “Have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed” [6.17]. What initially seemed their deepest desire turns into a self-constructed prison, namely, lusts or *epithumia*, the object of desire or yearning where the preposition *epi-* or upon serves to intensify this desire or *thumos* (passion, ardor). “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies [6.12]. In the verse at hand such desire-upon resides in the *kardia* or heart (cf. vs. 22).

As soon as this intense desire takes root, it has two direct consequences: 1) into (*eis*) impurity or *akatharsia*: “For just as you once yielded your members to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity” [6.19]. 2) Dishonoring or *atimazo* which means to esteem

lightly or treat as unworthy. “That they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name” [Acts 5.41]. Such dishonoring occurs among those who consent to it, that is, “among themselves” or literally “in (*en*) themselves” which suggests perverse sexual practices.

1-Vs. 25: because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator who is blessed for ever! Amen.

Vs. 23 has the verb *allasso* for exchanged where here is the same but with the preposition *meta-* prefaced to it, with or after, thereby reading *metallasso*. *Meta* lends greater force and urgency to the exchange, emphasizing the transition if you will, with the only other reference occurring in the next verse. The *meta* of the *allasso* consists in the truth or *aletheia* (cf. vs. 18) about God (genitive case, of God) for a lie or *pseudos*: “therefore putting away falsehood, let everyone speak the truth with his neighbor” [Eph 4.25].

Once the *metallasso* has done its job and *pseudos* has taken root, those who have done this *metallasso* both worship and serve creatures, not their Creator. The two verbs are *sebazomai* and *latreuo*. The former means to worship in a religious fashion where the element of fear as respect is present and is the only NT reference. The latter connotes serving or ministering (for hire). “For we are the true circumcision who worship God in spirit and glory in Christ Jesus” [Phl 3.3].

Eulogetos is the adjective for blessed: “The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, he who is blessed forever” [2Cor 11.31]. Paul says “amen” to conclude the polemic against immoral behavior begin in vs. 18...taking a break, if you will...and resumes the same theme through the end of this chapter.

1-Vs. 26: For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. Their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural,

Dia touto or for this reason refers to the *metallasso* of the previous verse resulting in God giving up those who subscribed to base inclinations, *paradidomai* being the verbal root to give. It’s prefaced with the preposition *para-* connoting that which is beside and hence to be in the company of in the sense of surrendering. “The standard of teaching to which you were committed” [6.17]. The object of this verb are “dishonorable passions” or *pathos* which are *atimia*, a noun. This phrase is prefaced with the preposition *eis* or “into dishonorable passions.” “Put to death...fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire and covetousness” [Col 3.5]. “One vessel for beauty and another for menial use” [9.21]?

In the next sentence which continues into vs. 27 Paul speaks of “their” women meaning wives of those husbands engaging in immoral behavior which makes the situation at hand

all the worse. The *metallasso* of their husbands spills over to the *metallasso* of these wives governed by *eis* or into. This pertains to relations or *chresis* meaning the sexual act (usually translated as employment, usage, intimacy), this word having one other NT reference which occurs in the next verse.

1-Vs. 27: and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in their own persons the due penalty for their error.

It seems that the base actions depicted prior to vs. 26 pertain to men after which their wives are introduced briefly before Paul returns to the men who imitated their spouses. *Aphiemi* as gave up is stronger in the Greek, meaning to forsake. “And that the husband should not divorce his wife” [1Cor 7.11]. What brought about this *aphiemi* is that men were passionate for each other, *ekkaio*, being the only NT occurrence, intensified by the preposition *ek-* or from. It’s joined with the noun *orexis* or passion or a reaching out in intense desire, this too being the only NT occurrence intensified by the preposition *eis* or “into one another.”

Once men have given into their *orexis*...have stretched themselves out...easily they commit shameless acts, the verb being *katergazomai* which means to achieve by labor where the preposition *kata-* suggests it’s done according to a plan or in this case, according to *orexis*. “For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression” [4.15]. The result, of course, is *aschemosune*, a noun which means lack of grace and form as well as being indecorous, the only occurrence in the NT. Such behavior is homosexual by nature reading literally “men in men.”

The result? Such persons are on the receiving end, the verb *apolamabano* (*apo-* or from signifying a more direct reception or from another) being used. “To redeem those who were under the law so that we might receive adoption as sons” [Gal 4.5]. Openness in themselves (*en heautois*) is the penalty or *antimisthia* which also means recompense or something done in place of (*anti-*) something else. The only other NT reference is 2Cor 6.13: “In return—I speak as to children—widen your hearts also.” In the verse at hand it is associated with *plane* or error which means a wandering. “By the cunning of men, by their craftiness in deceitful wiles” [Eph 4.14].

1-Vs. 28: And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a base mind and to improper conduct.

Dokimazo as see fit means to put to the test, to examine and admit with regard to God. “Know his will and approve what is excellent because you are instructed in the law” [2.18].

The perverse behavior Paul is outlining in these verses is a result of such persons failing to “acknowledge” God, the noun *epignosis* or literally knowledge upon (*epi-*) which is prefaced by the preposition *en* or “in knowledge-upon.” “Since through the law comes knowledge of sin” [3.20].

This failure in a particular knowing-upon compelled God to give (them) up or *paradidomai*, another instance of that handing over or beside, *para-* as in vs. 26. Here it pertains to a mind (*nous*, cf. 1.14; an example of an alpha privative) which is base (*adokimos*), this adjective applicable to anything that doesn’t stand the test.

The phrase “improper conduct” is rendered literally as “to do those things which are not befitting,” *katheko* which means literally, to come down (*kata-*) to, to reach. Thus the behavior at hand does not attain normal human standards of living. The only other NT reference is Acts 22.22: “For he ought not to live.”

1-Vss. 29-31: They were filled with all manner of wickedness, evil, covetousness, malice. Full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity, they are gossips, 30) slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, 31) foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless.

The combination of these three verses yields a list of twenty vices, if you will, under the general category of wickedness or *adikia* (cf. vs. 18), the alpha privative joined with the adjective root *dikaios* (righteous). When he says that the men are filled with such things, it’s an understatement, given that the vices at hand amount to twenty, *pleroo* (to fill) being the verb. “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing” [15.13].

Chances are that when Paul was reciting this litany of horrors, he was mindful of his former state in life as a persecutor of the church. That attitude can be found in the being insolent or *hubristes* (related to the English hubris) which is a mixture of cruelty and pride. It has one other NT reference applicable to Paul himself: “Though I formerly blasphemed and persecuted and insulted him; but I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief” [1Tm 1.13]. Such self-effacing is a sure way of relieving tension and showing Paul’s authenticity when addressing the Romans.

1-Vs. 32: Though they know God's decree that those who do such things deserve to die, they not only do them but approve those who practice them.

Here Paul says that persons who fall under the twenty categories listed in the previous verse aren’t ignorant of God, the verb *epigignosko* being used (cf. *epignosis* in vs. 28 which derives from it) in the sense of knowing-upon or *epi-*, full knowledge. “Now I know in part;

then I shall understand full, even as I have been fully understood” [1Cor 13.12]. The knowing-upon here pertains to the divine decree or *dikaioma* or that which is right and related to the root of *adikia* as well as its opposite in vs. 29. “If a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision” [2.26]? In the verse at hand, *dikaioma* is singular and can refer to the Law or Torah. In fact, this word occurs frequently throughout the Septuagint version of Deuteronomy. “And now, O Israel, give heed to the statutes and the ordinances which I teach you and do them” [Dt 4.1].

Those who follow through on the twenty vices are deserving of death, *axios*. “I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us” [8.18]. In addition to engaging in such immoral behavior, they approve those who do likewise, *suneudikeo*, which consists of the same root as *dikaioma* above prefaced with the preposition *sun-* or with and *eu-*, an adverbial form of good, that is, well. This gives the added feature of taking delight, albeit in a perverse fashion. “If any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her” [1Cor 7.12]. The *eu-*part, if you will, concurs with the verb *prasso* used twice, practice and do. The wicked act as false teachers, initiating others into their twenty forms of misbehavior.

Chapter Two

2-Vs. 1: Therefore you have no excuse, O man, whoever you are, when you judge another; for in passing judgment upon him you condemn yourself because you, the judge, are doing the very same things.

Dio or therefore serves to make a transition between the “ungodliness and wickedness” described in the previous chapter from vs. 18 onward. Paul seems to shift his tone from addressing the Romans to all persons (‘whoever you are’) knowing that while dealing with a certain group of people (‘the Jew first and also the Greek’), his words are universal. He begins with anyone having “no excuse” or *anapologetos* which has one other biblical reference, that being in 1.20, a legal term meaning having no defense for inexcusable actions.

The verse at hand has four references to the verbal root *krino* meaning to judge and is found next in vs. 12: “And all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law.” The first pertains literally to all (*pan*) who are judging, the second to judging another (*heteros*), the third to condemnation of oneself. This has the form *katakrino* with the

preface *kata-* (in accord with) which is a more intense form of the verb. “He condemned sin in the flesh” [8.3]. The fourth has the verb as “judge.”

2-Vs. 2: We know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who do such things.

After giving four instances of *krino* in the previous verse, Paul speaks in the first person plural reflecting a growing a collective awareness on his part, that each person has knowledge, *oida* implying the act of seeing or perceiving, here pertinent to one’s conscience. “Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law” [3.19]. The object of *oida* here is divine judgment or *krima* which is derived from the same verbal root discussed in vs. 1. “Their condemnation is just” [3.8].

The Greek text lacks “falls” but has the verb “to be” with regard to the English adverb rightly which reads literally according to (*kata*) the truth, *aletheia* (cf. 1.25).

2-Vs. 3: Do you suppose, O man, that when you judge those who do such things and yet do them yourself, you will escape the judgment of God?

This and the next verse form a rhetorical question where Paul continues to address not just the Romans which he’s doing right now but realizes in the process that he intends his words for everyone by using *anthropos* (man) as in vs. 1. He links supposing or *logizomai* with the above-mentioned *krino* or judging. *Logizomai* generally means to reckon or consider and in the Christian context can apply to entertaining unwanted thoughts. “Will not his uncircumcision be regard as circumcision” [vs. 26]? *Logizomai* here borders on this negative sense, that is, a tendency to judge what one is doing, the two in essence being the same, a fact which escapes the person who is judging.

Ekpheugo is the verb for escape, the preposition *ek-* or from, thereby heightening the sense of fleeing. “Sudden destruction will come upon them as travail comes upon a woman with child, and there will be no escape” [1Ths 5.3]. By judging another person guilty as oneself, such flight from divine judgment or *krima* (cf. vs. 2) will be impossible.

2-Vs. 4: Or do you presume upon the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience? Do you not know that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?

E (or) connects this verse with the previous one and consists of two sentences thereby making three rhetorical questions pretty where Paul expects no answer, more interested to grab his listeners’ attention.

Kataphroneo is the verb for presume whose root means to feel or to think prefaced with the preposition *kata-*, both as down and according to, the former implied here as a kind of looking down with an arrogant attitude. “Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing” [1Cor 11.22]? The object of such presumption/despising are three attributes belonging to God characterized by richness or *ploutos* “In order to make known the riches of his glory for the vessels of mercy” [9.23]:

1) *Chrestotes* or kindness which is similar to the Hebrew *chesed*. “No one does good, not even one” [3.12].

2) *Anoche* or forbearance which implies toleration. The only other NT reference is 3.26: “In the forbearance of God it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous.”

3) *Makrothumia* or patience literally as a *thumos* (cf. 1.24) which is *makros* or long, that is, long suffering. “Has endured with much patience the vessels of wrath made for destruction” [9.22].

Apparently those whom Paul is addressing failed to know or *agnoeo* (cf. 1.13; alpha privative prefaced to *noeo*, cf. 1.20) with regard to God’s kindness, *chrestos*, an adjective related to *chrestotes* in the first sentence. “Bad company ruins good morals”[1Chor 15.33]. The adjectival form used as a noun serves to modify God, that is, God being *chrestos* or having *chesed*. It’s intended to lead one to *metanoia* or repentance, this word consisting of *nous* or mind (cf. 1.14) prefaced with the preposition *meta-* which here is taken as “after”...to lead the mind after or after earlier unbecoming behavior and situate it in a new state.

2-Vs. 5: But by your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.

After three rapid fire rhetorical questions Paul gets right to the point by starting off with the heart (*kardia*, cf. 1.24) which he calls both hard and impenitent, *sklerotes* and *ametanoetos*. The first is a noun, the only NT reference, implying roughness or being stiff, unable to be flexible. The second is an adjective more pertinent to describing *kardia* and related to *metanoia* of the previous verse, that is, not (alpha privative) having the disposition for it. It too is the only NT reference.

This heart is the means by which divine wrath(*orge*, cf. 1.18) is being stored up or *thesaurizo* which suggests putting on hold or in reserve. “On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up” [1Cor 16.2]. Note the use of *orge* accumulating dangerously and “the day of *orge*” which reads literally as in the day of wrath. This day isn’t specified but can be perceived on the condition that the hardness and

impentence be removed. At this point Paul precludes any threat of punishment; instead he says that the righteous judgment (*dikaiokrisia*: only NT reference) of God will be uncovered, the noun *apokalupsis* (cf. 8.19). *Dikaiokrisia* is comprised of *dikaioi* (cf. 1.29) and the verbal root *krino* (cf. 2.3).

2-Vss. 6-7: For he will render to every man according to his works: 7) to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life;

Two verse are combined because the first one is so short.

Apodidomai is the verb for render or to give back or restore, the preposition *apo-* meaning from. “Repay no one evil for evil but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all” [12.17]. Such giving back implies restoring what already belongs to a person and applies to everyone in accord with or *kata* one’s works or *ergon* which also can apply to one’s occupation. “They show that what the law requires (*ergon*) is written on their hearts” [2.15].

Vs. 7 deals positively concerning *ergon*, that is, situating it literally under patience or *hupomone* (*hupo-*). “Knowing that suffering produces endurance” [5.3]. Such *ergon* is good or *agathos*. “And why not do evil that good may come” [3.8]?

The *kata* or according to as related to works leads to a seeking (*zeteo*; cf. 10.3) of the following: glory, honor and immortality or *doxa* (cf. 1.23), *time* (cf. 9.21) and *aphtharsia*. The third term is alpha privative meaning no-corruption, usually pertaining to the body. “What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable (noun)” [1Cor 15.42].

As for eternal life, the verb to give is not in the Greek text, *aionios* used frequently in the NT and also pertains to lasting for an age or *aion*. “Grace also might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” [5.21].

2-Vs. 8: but for those who are factious and do not obey the truth, but obey wickedness, there will be wrath and fury.

Here it may be said that the *ergon* of each person noted in the previous verse can be negative, that is, as belonging to those who are both factious and who fail to obey the truth. The first word or *eritheia* pertains to selfish ambition and partisanship and is among an extensive list of undesirable traits in 2Cor 12.20. *Eritheia* has the preposition *ex-* (from, out), suggesting that persons of such a persuasion operate from it.

There are two verbs for obey, the first being negative or *apeitheo* meaning not to be persuaded or to withhold belief. “All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people” [10.21]. The second is the same verb minus alpha privative, *peitho* or to persuade. “But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead” [2Cor 1.9]. Such persons are persuaded by wickedness or *adikia* (cf. 1.32). The result? Wrath and fury or *orge* (cf. vs. 5) and *thumos*, the latter’s passionate nature having a negative meaning compared to vs. 4.

2-Vs. 9: There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek,

Paul gets apocalyptic here, some of his listeners wondering where he had gotten this insight, possibly is centered in part around the perception of Jesus’ supposed coming. He makes the distinction between Jew and Greek (i.e., first and second), many of his listeners among the Romans being either one or the other, so they’re all thrown into the same boat. Also Greek was commonly spoken throughout the empire.

Tribulation and distress or *thlipsis* and *stenoxoria* have a lot in common, a pressing together and narrowness of place. Two references: “We rejoice in our sufferings knowing that suffering produces endurance” [5.3]. The second has two other NT references, 2Cor 6.4 and 12.10, the former being cited here: “Through great endurance, in affliction, hardships, calamities.”

Both *thlipsis* and *stenoria* are literally upon (*epi*) every *psuche* or soul who does evil or *kakos* (cf. 1.30 but not noted there), the verb being *katergazomai* which contains the root for *ergon* (cf. vs. 8) prefaced with the preposition *kata-* which can be taken as downward (the direction of evil from good) and according to a given plan. It also connotes the perpetuation of a given action into the indefinite future. “For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression” [4.15].

2-Vss. 10-11: but glory and honor and peace for every one who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. 11) For God shows no partiality.

For the second time in a row and for emphasis, Paul speaks of the Jew and Greek. Presumably other ethnic groups are included because with God (*para* is used connoting a being beside him) there’s no partiality or *prosopolempsia* which consists of the root for person or more technically, face, prefaced with the preposition *pros-*, direction towards-which. The idea seems to be of bowing profoundly before another person...another face, if you will. And so God doesn’t bow before another person but treats all as equal. This noun

has three other NT references, one of which being Eph 6.9: “and there is no partiality with him.”

Related to the lack of *prosopoloempsia* at hand is divine glory, honor and peace or *doxa*, *time* (the two being found together in vs. 7) and *eirene* (cf. 1.8) which belongs to those doing good, the verb being *ergazomai* as in vs. 4 which involves the making of a commitment to them.

2-Vs. 12: All who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law.

Paul makes it clear he’s speaking here with the Jews (first) by reason of the law or Torah (cf. 1.32) and uses the adverb *anomos* which is the only NT reference, alpha privative plus *nomos*, the noun for law, this being the first of many occurrences in Romans, the next being in vs. 14.

Note the two pairs where in the first sin and death are pretty much equivalent, *hamartano* and *apollumi*. The first commonly refers to missing the mark and the second implies utter destruction. “Since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” [3.23]. “For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing” [1Cor 1.18]. The second involves *hamartano* and *krino*, to be judged (cf. vs. 1).

2-Vs. 13: For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified.

Again Paul speaks of the *nomos*/Torah, dividing perception of it into two types: hearers and doers, *akroates* and *poietai*. The former’s root is *akroaomai* which involves attentiveness and obedience and the latter from the common root *poieo* (cf. 1.9), to do or to make. *Akroates* has one other NT reference, Jms 1.22: “But be doers (*poietai*) of the word and not hearers only.”

Akroates = *dikaios* (cf. vs. 5) or righteous “beside” or *para* God and *poietai* = *dikaioo* or justified. “That you may be justified in your words and prevail when you are judged” [3.4]. The verb *dikaioo* occurs twenty-seven times in Romans.

2-Vs. 14: When Gentiles who have not the law do by nature what the law requires, they are a law to themselves even though they do not have the law.

Paul now contrasts the Jews (i.e., those designated as first as in vs. 10) and the Gentiles or those who aren’t Jews which includes, of course, the Greeks as in vs. 10. *Ethnos* (cf. 1.13) is

the noun for Gentiles, the vast bulk of humanity which means nations. Even though they do not have *nomos*/Torah, such peoples function in accord with it or literally do *ta* or the things proper to it. The reason? It is inscribed in their nature or *phusis* (cf. 1.26 but not noted there). In sum, *nomos*/Torah is universal and can be summed up in the Ten Commandments.

2-Vs. 15: They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts while their conscience also bears witness and their conflicting thoughts accuse or perhaps excuse them

This verse continues into the next forming one extended sentence.

“They” refers to the Gentiles whom Paul considers as on the same plane as the Jews, he being one, this vast bulk of the human race showing the law’s requirement. The verb is *endeiknumi* with the preposition *en-* or in for emphasis concerning this showing. “I have raised you up for the very purpose of showing my power in you” [9.17]. The showing-in concerns the *ergon* of the law, the deed or work (cf. vs. 9) which is inscribed upon the hearts (*kardia*, cf. vs. 5) of the Gentiles or literally, “in (*en*) their hearts.”

While this showing-in is taking place, along with it we have a bearing witness or *summartureo*, literally a giving witness-with or *sum-*, this verb having two NT references, 8.16 and 9.1, the former being cited here: “It is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God.” Such witnessing-with pertains to the singular conscience of the plural Gentiles, *suneidesis*, a knowing-with or a second example of *sun-* (with; *sum-* and *sun-* are the same). Singular in the sense of unity and plural in the sense that this unity is shared equally among non-Jews. “One must be subject not only to avoid God’s wrath but also for the sake of conscience” [13.5].

Despite this twofold advantage for the Gentiles, they have conflicting thoughts which are just as applicable to Jews alike, that is, *logismos* (cf. *logizomai* in vs. 3) which can be associated with machinations or thoughts run wild. 2Cor 10.5 is the only other NT reference: “We destroy arguments and every proud obstacle to the knowledge of God and take every thought captive to obey Christ.” The adjective conflicting is rendered literally as “between one another” with the verb *katerogeo* meaning to accuse, the preposition *kata-* here implying down-ness, if you will. “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?” so that they might accuse him” [Mt 12.10]. Also these conflicting thoughts may excuse the Gentiles, *apologeomai* which connotes making a defense. “Have you been thinking all along that we have been defending ourselves before you” [2Cor 12.19]?

2-Vs. 16: on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.

After having spoken of the law/Torah, Paul mentions the gospel as belonging to him, first person singular as in 16.25 using the preposition *kata* or in accord with. The words “my gospel” seems to intimate not so much a written version—Jesus’ words still being handed down orally—but to his life which is in accord with the principles set down in the gospel. It seems that Paul wishes to make a distinction between the Torah which had been written for centuries and the gospel—“my gospel”—which has been around only for a few years.

Note that this personal gospel is identified with a certain day which is not unlike a *kairos* event when God will pass judgement (*krino*, cf. vs. 12) upon human secrets or *ta krupta* (*kruptos*, cf. vs. 29), literally as “the hidden things,” *krupto* being the verb. “For you had died, and your life is hid with Christ in God” [Col 3.3]. Jesus is the agent, if you will, by whom God will effect this.

2-Vss. 17-18: But if you call yourself a Jew and rely upon the law and boast of your relation to God 18) and know his will and approve what is excellent, because you are instructed in the law,

Paul switches back to addressing Jews after he mentions the Gentiles, trying to convince the former that in God’s eyes the latter are on the same footing. Note two verbs having the preposition *epi-* or upon prefaced to them which serves to intensify their meaning, *eponomazo* (the only NT reference, to name-upon) and *epanapauo*. The latter applies directly to the law has one other reference, Lk 10.6: “And if a son of peace is there, your peace shall rest upon him.”

Kauchaomai or to boast pertains to a Jew’s relation with God which reads literally “in God.” “We rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God” [5.2].

Vs. 18 continues with a person calling himself (i.e., that calling-upon and relying-upon) a Jew who knows (*gignosko*: cf. 1.23) God’s will or *thelema* (cf. 1.10 but not noted there). Also included is an approving (*dokimazo*, cf. 1.28) of what may be called literally a carrying through (*dia-*) or *diaphero* which implies making a difference. “For star differs from star in glory” [1Cor 15.41].

Katecho is the verb for instruction and as noted in 1.18, implies a holding down (*kata-*), here concerning the Torah.

2-Vss. 19-21: and if you are sure that you are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, 20) a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the

embodiment of knowledge and truth–21) you then who teach others, will you not teach yourself? While you preach against stealing, do you steal?

Vss. 17 and 18 start off on what seems to be a positive note but quickly devolve into a condemnation resting upon anyone calling himself a Jew (cf. vs. 17) who is sure or *peitho* which as noted in vs. 8 means to persuade. This persuasion, if you will, implies that the persons Paul is addressing have deluded themselves into three ways which in essence they are not. That is to say, a guide, light and corrector or *hodegos* (cf. Mt 15.14), *phos* and *paideutes* (cf. Heb 12.9). The last concerns education or instruction from early youth. In the verse at hand, *paideutes* concerns those persons who are foolish, *aphron* or lacking sense. “I repeat, let no one think me foolish” [2Cor 11.16].

The *nomos*/Torah indeed is from God and contains the embodiment of truth or the *morphosis* which is a form in the sense of being a kind of rough sketch or outline of *aletheia* (cf. 2.2). *Morphosis* has one other NT reference, 2Tm 3.5: “holding the form of religion but denying the power of it.”

Paul asks more or less rhetorically in two questions that such a person—presumably a guide, light, corrector, teacher and having the Torah—to teach (*didasko*) himself first before doing it with others. “If service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching” [12.7]. The second rhetorical question deals with preaching about stealing, *kerusso* suggestive of being a herald. “That is, the word of faith which we preach” [10.8].

2-Vss. 22-23: You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? 23) You who boast in the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law?

These two verses contain three more rhetorical questions concerning those who consider themselves to be a Jew (cf. vs. 17). The first has to do with adultery or *moicheuo*. “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery’” [Mt 5.27]. The second concerns abhorring idols, *bdelusso* having one other NT reference, “But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the polluted, as for murderers, fornicators, sorcerers, idolaters and all liars, their lot shall be in the lake that burns with fire and sulphur which is the second death” [Rev 21.8].

In addition to an abhorrence of idolatry in the verse at hand, those of such a mind rob temples. The third concerns the *nomos*/Torah directly, that is, a contrast between boasting in it and breaking it, *kauchaomai* (cf. vs. 17) and *atimazo* (cf. 1.24), the latter connoting dishonor and contempt. It is also associated with breaking or *parabasis* which also meanings a transgression with the preposition *para-* as beside suggesting being outside the

law or in its vicinity without subjection to it. “For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression” [4.15].

2-Vs. 24: For as it is written, "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you."

Paul’s frequent reference to *nomos*/Torah has to do with Jewish tradition, his sense of which carries over into the words “For as it is written” (inserted at the end of the quote, not at the beginning as here) which in Romans has ten other references and refer to direct quotes from scripture: 3.10, 4.17, 8.36, 9.13 & 33, 10.15, 11.8 & 26, 15.3 & 21.

The scriptural quote at hand comes from Is 52.5 quoted in full as follows: “Now therefore what have I here, says the Lord, seeing that my people are taken away for nothing? Their rulers wail, says the Lord, and continually all the day my name is despised.” Note that with regard to the quoted verse, the verb *bdelusso* is used again with the preposition *en* or “in the Gentiles,” making this blaspheming (*blasphemeo*, cf. 3.7) all the stronger.

As for the context of the Isaiah verse, it concerns Israel being taken into Egypt as well as their oppression by the Assyrians. It has an element of surprise concerning the Lord (‘What have I here’) which is intended to capture the attention of the people and is followed by a rhetorical question. While Israel’s rulers wail their twofold predicament, they don’t seem to understand why they ended up the way they did. As a result, they despise the Lord’s name, *na’ats* connoting derision of which *bdelusso* is the translation.

2-Vss. 25-26: Circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law; but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. 26) So if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision?

From now until the conclusion of this chapter Paul shifts attention to the physical mark of Judaism, circumcision or *peritome*, literally, a cutting around (*peri-*). “Or what is the value of circumcision” [3.1]? This rite has value, *opheleo* also meaning to profit as in 1Cor 13.3: “And if I deliver my body to be burned but had not love, I gain nothing.”

In the verse at hand circumcision is dependent upon obedience to the *nomos*/Torah, the common verb *prasso* (cf. 1.32) being used which means to accomplish, to be busy with. On the other hand, there exists a possibility of breaking the *nomos*/Torah, *parabates*. It is derived from the verbal root *baino* (to go) prefaced with the preposition *para-*, beside...to go beside the law, literally speaking. “But if I build up again those things which I tore down, then I prove myself a transgressor” [Gal 2.18]. And so the *para-* or beside-ness, if you will, of *parabates* results in the opposite of circumcision, (*akrobustia*), found next in

3.30: “And he will justify the circumcised on the ground of their faith and the uncircumcised through their faith.”

The second rhetorical question concerns a man who is *uncircumcised* keeping the law’s precepts, *phulasso* meaning to keep watch or guard. “For even those who receive circumcision do not themselves keep the law” [Gal 6.13]. The object of this keeping more or less as a guard or a watchman consists of the Torah’s precepts, *dikaioma* (cf. 1.32) where not being circumcised makes him a Jew, one who is circumcised.

2-Vs. 27: Then those who are physically uncircumcised but keep the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law.

Paul now speaks of uncircumcised persons by nature or literally from (*ek*) nature or *phusis* (cf. vs. 14) who keep the Torah, *teleo* [13.6] being used instead of *phulasso* of the previous verse, the former meaning to finish carrying out or to bring to completion. Thus *teleo* has a greater force than *phulasso* and applies more aptly here to a person who isn’t circumcised but observes the *nomos*/Torah.

Krino (cf. 2.16) means to condemn as well as to judge, applicable to those (i.e., Jews) who, have both what is written and circumcision, the former coming across as literally “through the letter” or *gramma*. “So that we serve not under the old written code but in the new life of the Spirit” [7.6]. Despite this twofold advantage of the Jew over the Gentile, the former is a *parabates* (cf. vs. 26) or breaker of the *nomos*/Torah.

2-Vss. 28-29: For he is not a real Jew who is one outwardly nor is true circumcision something external and physical. 29) He is a Jew who is one inwardly, and real circumcision is a matter of the heart, spiritual and not literal. His praise is not from men but from God.

The phrase *en to phanero* (*phaneros*, cf. 1.19) occurs twice, literally as “in that which is manifest” rendered here as external and applies to one’s behavior. “Real” doesn’t occur in the Greek text as applicable to both Jew and circumcision.

In contrast to *en to phanero* is the phrase *en to krupto* (*kruptos*, cf. 2.16), literally as “in that which is hidden or secret,” equivalent to *kardia* (cf. 2.15) or heart.

Two other contrasts: 1) *pneuma* (cf. 1.11) and *gramma* (cf. vs. 27), both with the preposition *en* or in pertaining to spirit and letter. 2) Men and God, the former with the preposition *en* or in and the latter, the preposition *ek* or from. Both are concerned with praise or *epainos*: “Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval” [13.3].

Chapter Three

3-Vss. 1-2: Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? 2) Much in every way. To begin with, the Jews are entrusted with the oracles of God.

The first verse of this new chapter begins with two short rhetorical questions, again the audience consisting of Jews living in Rome. Compare advantage and value, *perissos* and *opheleia*, the former being an adjective meaning that which encircles something or is in excess. “Now it is superfluous for me to write to you about the offering for the saints” [2Cor 9.1]. The latter also pertains to a profit as in Jd 16, the only other NT reference: “These are grumblers, malcontents, following their own passions, loud-mouthed boasters, flattering people to gain advantage.”

Tropos is the noun for way and also refers to a manner or fashion. “Let no one deceive you in any way” [2Ths 2.3]. In the verse at hand, *tropos* is used with the preposition *kata*, in accord with, so it doesn’t stand alone, if you will.

For Paul, tantamount to circumcision are divine oracles or *logion*, a word similar to *logos* or word as expression and here most likely pertains to the Torah. “You need some one to teach you again the first principles of God’s word” [Heb 5.12]. This association with Torah is intimated by *logion* being entrusted to the Jews, *pisteuo* as the root for *pistis* or faith. “The righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe” [3.22].

3-Vss. 3-4: What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God? 4) By no means! Let God be true though every man be false, as it is written, "That you may be justified in your words and prevail when you are judged."

Two more rhetorical questions for an audience from which Paul doesn’t expect a verbal response but one where most will accept his gospel concerning Jesus Christ, this and the next chapter being prologues to it, if you will. Both questions are separated as well as joined by “By no means.” Note the contrast between faithfulness and its opposite, *apistia* and *pistis* (cf. 1.17). For the former, cf. 11.20: “They were broken off because of their unbelief.” The two are connected, if you will, through the verb *katargeo*, to nullify or to render inactive, the preposition *kata*- suggesting downward movement. “Do we then overthrow the law by this faith [vs. 31]?”

Paul follows up on his two rhetorical questions with an acknowledgment of two sides, God and man, which don’t seem capable of being reconciled, at least at this point where Paul is

making a point. God is true; the verse has not just man but “every man” as false, *alethes* and *pseustes*, the latter being referred in 1Tm 1.10: “Immoral persons, sodomites, kidnapers, liars, perjurers and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine.”

Paul quotes from Ps 51.4 (It is quoted in full in the next paragraph) to show the apparently unbridgeable gap noted above where justified or *dikaioo* (cf. 2.13) relates to words or *logos*, the first occurrence of this key word in Romans and is found next in 9.6: “But it is not as though the word of God had failed.” *Nikao* means to prevail in the sense of to conquer. “Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good” [12.21]. This verb is used with *krino* or judged (cf. 2.27).

As for Ps 51.4 just noted, the full quote it runs in full as: “Against you, you only, have I sinned and done that which is evil in your sight so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless in your judgment.” Although Paul doesn’t mention the first half dealing with sin, he has it in mind with *hopos* rendered as “so that” leading into the words he quotes here. As for divine justification (*tsadaq* is the verbal root, equivalent to *dikaioo*), it has two features: the sentence which God passes is *daver* which derives from the verbal root *davar* (to speak) and is akin to *logos*. Also God is blameless or *zakah* in the sense of being pure. “Who can say, ‘I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin’” [Prov 20.9]?

3-Vs. 5: But if our wickedness serves to show the justice of God, what shall we say? That God is unjust to inflict wrath on us? (I speak in a human way).

By now Paul’s audience at Rome is feeling put on the spot, that is, two more rhetorical questions knowing that more will follow not just in this chapter but beyond. Such a way of presenting himself gives the impression of both sincerity and guilt; in a word, that Paul is hyper-tense and doesn’t seem able to relieve himself of it which stems in large part from his persecution of the Christian church prior to his conversion. He makes a contrast between human wickedness and divine justice, *adikia* (cf. 2.8) and *dikaiosune* (cf. 1.18). The verb *sunistemi* serves to connect the former with the latter and means literally to stand together (*sun-*), quite appropriate for two such diametrical opposites.

Epiphero means to inflict, literally as to bring or to bear upon (*epi-*) with regard to divine wrath or *orge* (cf. 2.8) which, if he did this, it would make God unjust or *adikos*. “When one of you has a grievance against a brother, does he dare go to law before the unrighteous instead of the saints” [1Cor 6.1]?

Paul concludes this rhetorical sentence as well as the one immediately before it as speaking, literally rendered, “according to (*kata*) man” or *anthropos*.

3-Vss. 6-8: By no means! For then how could God judge the world? 7) But if through my falsehood God's truthfulness abounds to his glory, why am I still being condemned as a sinner? 8) And why not do evil that good may come?—as some people slanderously charge us with saying. Their condemnation is just.

Paul answers his two rhetorical questions in the previous verse with the exclamation *me genoito* which reads literally “no it may be becoming” and would expect a negative response if he were present among the Romans.

The first question Paul poses pertains to divine judgment (*krino*, cf. vs 4) of the world (*kosmos*, cf. 1.8), that is, in response to the second of his own rhetorical one in vs. 5. Next he shifts attention to his own falsehood or *pseuma*, the only NT reference which is prefaced with the preposition *en* reading literally “in my falsehood.” Such *pseuma* contrasts with divine truth or *aletheia* (cf. 2.20). Compare this preposition with another, *eis*, that is, with respect to *doxa* (cf. 2.11) or glory, “into his glory,” a full sense of in-ness, if you will. The verb *perisseuo* is used with this preposition which means to be in abundance or to be beyond measure. “And the free gift in the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many” [5.15]. In response, Paul asks why he is being condemned (*krino* again) as a sinner. When speaking like this, surely memories of the time when he had persecuted the church were haunting him.

Blasphemeo (cf. 2.24) is the verb for condemned which means to blaspheme or to speak evil of. The particle *kathos* (according as) is used twice: with the verb *blasphemeo* and *poieo* (cf. 2.13; to make, to do) and the adjective *kakos* (cf. 2.9) translated here as slanderously. Paul concludes that those who claim such *kakos* not just with regard to Paul but to “us,” presumably fellow Christians, are just in their condemnation (*krima*, cf. 2.3). The adjective is *endikos*, the preposition *en* or in prefaced to the root *dike*, sentence or condemnation.

3-Vs. 9: What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all; for I have already charged that all men, both Jews and Greeks, are under the power of sin,

Proecheo is the verb for being better off, the preposition *pro-* as before prefaced to the root *echo*, to have, the only NT reference. When Paul responds to his own rhetorical question, he does so emphatically, again having in mind his conversion from being a persecutor of Christians.

When bringing up the distinction between Jews and Greeks, Paul has in mind his words in 1.16 where faith in Jesus Christ by peoples both makes this distinction irrelevant. The verb *proaitiaomai* means to make a previous (*pro-*) accusation, the only NT reference

which pertains to the two categories of people being under sin or *hamartia* ('power' is lacking in the text). Actually this is the first reference to *hamartia* in Romans, the next being in vs. 20.

3-Vs. 10: as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one;

Paul quotes extensively from six verses of the Psalms plus one from Ecclesiastes and Isaiah to back up his *proaitiaomai*, that is, from vs. 10 all the way through vs. 18. Because of this, they are listed as follows.

As noted in 2.24 Paul uses the words "as it is written," a way of presenting the *nomos*/Torah in an authoritative fashion, assuring his listeners that they aren't listening only to him but to tradition. This phrase therefore applies to all the scriptural references presented here. *Dikaios* is the adjective for righteous (cf. 2.13).

The verse from Ps 14.1 runs in full as "The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds, there is none that does good." *Naval* is the word for fool which implies something withered or faded, thereby suggesting that such a person is in the process of decay and eventual death: "The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever" [Is 40.7]. Nabal is also a proper noun, the husband of Abigail: "Let not my lord regard this ill-natured fellow, Nabal; for as his name is, so is he; Nabal is his name, and folly is with him" [1 Sam 25.25]. "With him" is an expressive way of saying that the person of Nabal is identified with the essence of *naval*; both are one and the same.

To say something in one's heart (*belibu*) is to really mean it although such an utterance may be not be articulated. Thus when it comes to "There is no God," a person is truly *naval*, that is, denying ultimate reality and applies the essence of *naval*...decay...to what can never experience decay.

"There is none that does good." The word here ('There is not') is 'eyn which signifies complete negativity, lack of substance, as with the words "There is no ('eyn) God" just above.

3-Vs. 11: no one understands, no one seeks for God.

Here understanding and seeking are equivalent; the former has no object while the latter has God as an object. *Suniemi* (cf. 1.21 as a being-with or *sun-* and *zeteo* (cf. 2.7) are the verbs.

This verse from Ps 53.1 runs in full (similar to Ps 14.1 of vs. 10): “The fools says in his heart, ‘There is no God.’ They are corrupt, doing abominable iniquity; there is none that does good.” The psalm from which this verse is lifted is almost identical with Psalm 14; the former uses the divine name *YHWH* and the latter, *Elohim*. Because both psalms cover the same theme, an explanation of the Ps 53 will highlight several additional themes.

Cf. 3.19 for fool or *naval* which is in conjunction with words denying God’s existence. Also note the use of *lev* or heart which implies that he utters these words secretly to himself and not to others.

The second sentence of this psalm shifts from the singular (fool) to the plural corrupt or *shachat* which also means to destroy. “The Lord determined to lay in ruins the wall of the daughter of Zion” [Lam 2.8]. Thus the denial of God, while done in secret, leads to an external action which is damaging. *Tahav* for to abominate is joined with *hawel* or iniquity. “Because of your sins in which you acted more abominably than they” [Ezk 16.52]. This shift from singular fool to plural corrupt may be taken as a shift from the single-mindedness of evil intent to its plural iniquitous results.

3-Vs. 12: All have turned aside, together they have gone wrong; no one does good, not even one."

Ekkolino is the verb for turned aside which has the preposition *ek-* or from prefaced to it, thereby enhancing the idea of deviation. The only other NT reference to this verb is 1Pt 3.11 which quotes from Ps 34: “Let him turn away from evil and do right.” In the verse at hand *ekklino* is similar to *achreo* or to have gone wrong or to be worthless, the only NT use of this verb which is alpha privative with the adjective *chrestos* (cf. 2.4 as kindness). Compare *chrestos* with *chestotes* which similarly means goodness with the sense of moral integrity.

The quote at hand is from Eccl 7.20 which runs in full as follows: “Surely there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins.” The notion of a man who is righteous or *tsadyq* fits in well here in Romans where Paul is talking about righteousness, for example, *dikaiois* as in vs. 10. Note the preposition *b-*, literally “in earth” suggesting that lack of a *tsadyq* in the earth means it has no need and thus is barren. *Chata*’ is the verb meaning to sin and implies missing the mark as noted with regard to *hamartano* in 2.12.

3-Vs. 13: "Their throat is an open grave, they use their tongues to deceive." "The venom of asps is under their lips."

Dolioo means to deceive, the only NT use of this verb, venom from asps being the agent to effect such deception. It hearkens back to the serpent in the Garden of Eden which “was more subtle than any other wild creature that the Lord God has made” [Gn 3.1]. Such venom or *ios* has two other references, Jms 3.8 and 5.3, the former being cited here: “But no human being can tame the tongue—a restless evil, full of deadly poison.”

The verse from Ps 5.9 runs in full as “For there is no truth in their mouth; their heart is destruction, their throat is an open sepulcher, they flatter with their tongue.” The outline here is as such: mouth = no truth, heart = destruction, throat = open sepulcher, tongue = flatter.

3-Vs. 14: "Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness."

In the previous section mouth = no truth can be spelled out further as filled with curses and bitterness, *ara* and *pikra*. The former has no other NT reference whereas the latter has two, Acts 8.23 and Heb 12.15, the second being cited here: “That no ‘root of bitterness’ springs up and causes trouble and by it the many become defiled.”

The verse from Ps 10.7 runs as follows and is similar to Ps 5.9 quoted in the last section: “His mouth is filled with cursing and deceit and oppression; under his tongue are mischief and iniquity.”

3-Vss. 15-17: "Their feet are swift to shed blood, 16) in their paths are ruin and misery, 17) and the way of peace they do not know."

These three verse comprise two quotes which run as follows:

Is 59.7-8: “Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood; their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity, desolation and destruction are in their highways. The way of peace they know not, and there is no justice in their paths; they have made their roads crooked, no one who goes in them knows peace.”

Ruts or run and make haste are physical expressions of evil intent whereas thoughts or *machasheveth* are invisible sources of iniquity or ‘*aven*. The verbal root for *machasheveth* implies reckoning or inventing. Highways or *misilah* pertain to a raised road. Because travelers are exposed on them, it is easier for evildoers to carry out their desolation and destruction or *shod* and *shever*, the latter implying a breaking.

Vs. 8 takes up the theme of highways as in vs. 7 with three similar terms: 1) *Derek* or way lacks *shalom* or peace. 2) *Mahgalah* or paths connotes a rut in such paths. 3) *Netyvah* or

“roads” is suggestive of being trodden by feet. In the verse at hand, they are “crooked” or *haqesh*, a verb with four other biblical references, one of which is Prov 10.9: “He who walks in integrity walks securely, but he who perverts his ways will be found out.” Also *netyvah* do not offer peace or *shalom* for those traveling upon them.

Prov 1.16: “For their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed blood.”

Ruts is the verb for run and obviously suggests making haste. “The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous man runs into it and is safe” [Prov 18.10]. *Rah* or the common noun for evil is prefaced with the preposition *l-* or to. Compare *ruts* with *mahar*; the former applies to the act of running whereas the latter is more representative of an attitude which is impetuous or hasty.

3-Vs. 18: There is no fear of God before their eyes.

Ps 36.1: “Transgression speaks to the wicked deep in his heart; there is no fear of God before his eyes.”

Transgression or *peshah* assumes a personal character here, addressing the wicked person. This is reinforced by the verb *na’am* which is often used when God speaks to a person, for example, with the prophets and the classic statement, “Thus says the Lord.” Because *na’am* is used for a special form of address, here in vs. 1 the penetration of *peshah* is all the more revealing; it is amplified by “deep in his heart,” *qerev*. Once transgression gets *qerev*, its deep seated presence moves outward to one’s countenance as manifest in the eyes, *hayn* (singular), which also means a fountain. With this association in mind, we may say that the eye is the fountain of the soul, the *qerev*, amongst all which *peshah* creates an unfortunate unity, this verb connoting trembling as well as fear.

3-Vs. 19: Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God.

After a lengthy citation of scriptural verses dealing with “both Jews and Greeks under the power of sin” [vs. 9], Paul speaks in the first person plural (“we know”), the verb being *oida* (cf. 2.2) which is in line with the rhetorical way he presents his questions. Note two verbs relative to speaking, *lego* and *laleo*, as pertaining to *nomos*/Torah. The first deals with the substance of what is spoken and the second, the outward utterance. And so there’s a passage from *lego* to *laleo* by Torah with regard to those under Torah, literally, “in (*en*) the law.”

The passage just mentioned has two intentions:

1) To stop those actions which had brought about the condemnatory tone of the scriptural passages cited in vss. 10-18. That is to say, each mouth is to be stopped, *phrasso* meaning both to block up and to be silent. It has two NT references, 2Cor 11.10 and Heb 11.33, the former cited here: “This boast of mine shall not be silence in the regions of Achaia.”

2) That the entire world (*kosmos*, cf. 3.6) be responsible to God, *hupodikos* meaning liable or under (*hupo-*) judgment (*dike*, cf. 3.8 as reference regarding *endikos*) and is the only NT reference.

3-Vs. 20: For no human being will be justified in his sight by works of the law since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

The noun for human being is *sarx* meaning flesh found in 2.28 but not noted there and pertains to the physical nature of a human being. Here that physical nature can't be justified (*dikaioo*, cf. 3.4) before God, *enopion* suggesting in the presence of. Such lack of justification involves the *ergon* (cf. 2.15) of the Torah rendered literally “from (*ex*) the works of the law.” Any *ergon* begotten, if you will, *ex* the Torah yields knowledge of sin, *epignosis* (cf. 1.32) or a knowledge-upon (*epi-*) sin, *hamartia* (cf. 3.11).

Paul quotes Ps 143.2 which runs in full as “Enter not into judgment with your servant; for no man living is righteous before you.” By calling himself a servant (*havad*; can also apply to a slave) the psalmist puts himself in a lowly position in contrast to divine judgment (*mishpat*), knowing well that no person is righteous (*tsadaq*) before God. The act of going “into” judgment suggests an interchange between the psalmist and God.

3-Vs. 21: But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from law although the law and the prophets bear witness to it,

The key word here is “apart” or *choris* with respect to divine righteousness or *dikaioisune* (cf. 3.5) vs. the *nomos*/Torah, the verb *phaneroo* (cf. 1.19) serving to make clear this apartness. Despite this limitation and even hindrance, the *nomos*/Torah and prophets are witnesses to it, *martureo*. The only other reference to this verb in Romans is 10.2: “I bear witness that they have a zeal for God, but it is not enlightened.” With regard to *martureo*, consider Acts 10.43: “To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

3-Vss. 22-23: the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction; 23) since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

The first part of vs. 22 completes the sentence begun in vs. 21, speaking again of divine *dikaioisune* but specified as coming through (*dia*) faith in Jesus Christ with regard to those who believe in him. This is rendered literally by “into (*eis*) all believing” (*pisteuo*, cf. 1.16, the root for *pistis* (cf. vs. 3).

Earlier Paul spoke of both the distinction relative to Jew and Greek, the noun *diastole* having reference in music as the distinction between sounds. In addition to its use here it has one other NT reference, 10.12: “For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek.” The reason in the verse at hand for this lack of *dia*- or lack of through-ness, if it can be put as such? Each person has sinned and hasn’t measured up to God’s glory or *doxa* (cf. vs. 7), the verb being *hustereo* meaning to come in late, to be left behind as in a race. “So that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ” [1Cor 1.7].

3-Vss. 24-25: they are justified by his grace as a gift through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus 25) whom God put forward as an expiation by his blood to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins;

Despite the dire situation of humanity which Paul presents in the previous verse, nevertheless there is the fact of being justified (*dikaioo*, cf. vs. 20) where grace and gift are seen as one and the same, *charis* (cf. 1.5) and *dorean*, the latter being an adverb meaning freely. “Did I commit a sin in abasing myself so that you might be exalted because I preached God’s gospel without cost to you” [2Cor 11.7]? Both come about through (*dia*) redemption in (*en*) Christ, *apolutrosis* which means a releasing effected by payment, the preposition *apo*- meaning from. “As we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies” [8.23].

Both *charis* and *dorean* take their form through *apolutrosis*; i.e., grace and freely = release by someone who has paid for this to come about. This someone is God who sets it before (*pro*-), *protithemi* (cf. 1.13), intimating that it is done in a public fashion. Such a redemption is an expiation or *hilasterion*, meaning that which relates to appeasing or placating. This adjective has one other NT reference, Heb 9.5: “Above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat.”

Endeixis means a demonstration or proof (*endeiknumi*: to point out; the preposition *en*- or in) and has two other NT references, 2Cor 8.24 and Phil 1.28, the latter being cited here: “This is a clear omen to them of their destruction but of you salvation and that from God.” In the verse at hand, the preposition *eis* or into is used with *endeixis...eis* leading to *en*-, if you will. The manifestation or showing of blood is to be received by faith (*pistis*, cf.

vs. 22). It is in reference to *dikaiousune* (cf. vs. 22) or righteousness; compare with *dikaioo* in vs. 24.

Dia or through here is taken as “because” in reference to *paresis* or a passing over (*para-* or beside) of sins which had been committed and is the only NT use of this word. Such passing beside (literally) is done in divine forbearance, “divine” not in the Greek text, this noun rendered by the verb *progignomai* or to happen before (*pro-*), the only NT reference.

3-Vs. 26: it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies him who has faith in Jesus.

This verse begins with the noun *anochē* (cf. 2.4) or literally “in the display of God.”

Kairos with *nun* reads literally “in the now time” and is found next in 11.5: “So too at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace.” Perhaps Paul has in mind *kairos* as the life, death and resurrection of Jesus which, although recently begun, sets in motion a totally new way of telling time, if you will, compared with observance of the *nomos*/Torah. At the beginning of this new *kairos* God proves himself (*eis to einai*, literally ‘into being’) as righteous or *dikaios* (cf. vs. 10) and justifies *dikaioo* again) the person believing in Jesus rendered as “from (*ek*) faith” or *pistis*.

3-Vss. 27-28: Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. On what principle? On the principle of works? No, but on the principle of faith. 28) For we hold that a man is justified by faith apart from works of law.

Paul reverts to his use of asking rhetorical questions, the first time since vs. 9. He throws out three in rapid fire and answers them for the benefit of his listeners and readers. The subject is boasting or glorifying (*kauxesis*) which he puts in the first person plural, as if to have his listeners join in: “I Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to be proud of my work for God” [15.17]. The answer comes in one word, *ekkleio* meaning excluded as well as to shut out (*ek-*) and has one other NT reference, Gal 4.17: “They want to shut you out that you may make much of them.”

Paul’s second rhetorical question is in response to *ekkleio* which reads literally “through what law” or *nomos*, the noun used often with regard to Torah and associated with the third question concerning works, *ergon* (cf. vs. 20). Instead of *ergon*, Paul speaks of the *nomos* of faith, *pistis* (cf. vs. 26). This leads to his maintaining (again, using first person plural) justification by faith to the exclusion of works, *logizomai* noted in 2.3. However, *ergon* is associated with the second use of *nomos* which, of course, is the Torah.

3-Vss. 29-31: Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also 30) since God is one; and he will justify the circumcised on the ground of their faith and the uncircumcised through their faith. 31) Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.

Paul concludes this chapter with three more rhetorical questions, a way of speaking with his listeners which will continue into the next chapter and beyond. The first is reminiscent of 10.12: “For this is no distinction between Jew and Greek.” The oneness of God is the basis for positing God as belonging to the Gentiles as well as the Jews and hearkens back to Dt 6.4: “Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord.” Such divine oneness takes on special meaning in light of the tendency of Gentiles worshiping numerous gods compared with the God of Israel.

Being justified or *dikaioo* (cf. last verse though not mentioned) concerns both those who are circumcised and those who are not, another way of speaking about Jews and Gentiles. To the first belongs the preposition *ek* or literally “from faith” and to the second, the preposition *dia* or literally “through faith.” Despite this distinction of from and through, of being derived from and entering through, if you will, Paul says there is no reason to overthrow the law or *nomos*/Torah, the verb being *katargeo* (cf. vs. 3); instead, we—again, the first person plural—uphold this *nomos*/Torah, the common verb being *histemi* which means to stand or to establish.

Chapter Four

4-Vs. 1: What then shall we say about Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh?

This new chapter begins with yet another rapid fire rhetorical question Paul poses to his audience of Jews at Rome. The verb *heurisko* (to find, to hit upon) is not in the RSV which makes the verse read literally as “what shall we say to find Abraham.” “The very commandment which promised life proved to be death to me” [7.10]. Obviously Abraham is “found” among his Jewish listeners whom here he calls *propater*, literally as “before Father,” the only use of this noun in the NT. Paul makes himself one with them by using the first person plural literally as “our before Father.”

Paul intimates that while Abraham holds an esteemed place, he is according to (*kata*) the flesh, that is, not according to the (implied) Spirit. This isn’t disclosed to his listeners right now but will be as Paul proceeds to speak of Abraham in the context of what this patriarch is best known for through the epistle at hand, righteousness.

4-Vs. 2: For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about but not before God.

The small word “for” or *ei gar* (‘if for’) serves to qualify Abraham’s role, if you will. Despite his lofty position of “before father” in the previous verse, Abraham is not justified (*dikaioo*, cf. 3.30) by anything he had done. After all, Abraham is “according to the flesh.” The noun *ergon* or works (cf. 3.27) is prefaced with the preposition *ex* reading literally, “justified from works.”

Any self-justification, if you will, would offer Abraham an occasion to boast, the noun *kauchema* and the verb *echo*, literally as “to have a boast.” “Your boasting is not good” [1Cor 5.6]. Obviously such boasting has no value before (*pros*, direction toward-which) God.

4-Vs. 3: For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness."

Paul asks about the record of scripture, quoting (most likely from memory as many Jews could do, both educated and uneducated) Gen 15.6 which runs similarly as “And he believed the Lord; and he reckoned it to him as righteousness.” The verse at hand has the verb *pisteuo* (cf. 3.22) followed by the dative case. The other verb *logizomai* (cf. 3.28) is passive, if you will, God obviously being understood as operative, with the preposition *eis* (into) with *dikaiousune* (cf. 3.24) or righteousness.

As for Abram’s profession (his name at this stage of the game), the Lord did the reckoning or *chashav* which fundamentally means to impute, to reckon. This verb involves a certain amount of conniving and intimates that the Lord was working for Abram by equating his just expressed faith in God with righteousness, *tsedaqah*. The situation at hand was tense and needs to be taken into consideration: he was in the midst of a hostile, Canaanite population with a barren wife, a disgruntled servant (Eliezer) and his experience with Lot which brought about an encounter with the king of Sodom. Thus it isn’t surprising that the Lord attributed righteousness or justice to Abram for having believed in him, the same Lord who appeared to him within the tent during a dream. It is from this encounter that Abram achieved a boldness he had lacked up until now, enabling to bargain over Sodom and Gomorrah. Such is his expression of *tsedaqah*.

4-Vss. 4-5: Now to one who works, his wages are not reckoned as a gift but as his due. 5) And to one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness.

Paul speaks in terms familiar to everyone, namely, work and what a person gets for it. *Ergazomai* is the verb, the root for *ergon* as in vs. 2 and *logizomai* for reckoned as in vs. 3. He makes the simple distinction between what a person does for a living and its due or *opheilema* which has one other NT reference, Mt 5.12: “Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so men persecuted the prophets who were before you.” And so *opheilema* stands in contrast to *charis* or gift, often as grace as in 3.24.

Having put forth the basic necessity of making a living, Paul switches the idea of work to trust, *pisteuo* as in vs. meaning to believe. This belief, if you will, rests in God who not only justifies (*dikaioo* again with the preposition *epi*, upon) but does so with regard to those who are ungodly, *asebes*. Such an adjective is the negative of the noun *sebes* which is reverence to God, family and one’s political association. I.e., it is equivalent to the Latin *pietas*. By so not working (if you can put it that way), a person believes in God who directs his righteous toward an ungodly person, thereby making him righteous, the noun *dikaiosune* being used with the preposition *eis*, “into righteousness.”

4-Vss. 6-8: So also David pronounces a blessing upon the man to whom God reckons righteousness apart from works: 7) "Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered; 8) blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not reckon his sin."

In the same breath Paul quotes a Psalm verse from Israel’s first king, David, who pronounces (the common verb *lego*, to say or to declare; cf. 3.19) a blessing or *makarismos*, this noun having one other NT reference which is Gal 4.15: “What has become of the satisfaction you felt?” The adjective *makarios* or blessed (as in the beatitudes) basically means to be happy, so in the verse at hand such happiness results from awareness of having the attribute of righteousness (*dikaiosune*, cf. vs. 5) applied to him minus works, *ergon* (cf. vs. 4). More specifically, blessedness comes from the fact of knowing God’s *logizomai* (cf. vs. 4), of being the subject of his reckoning or consideration which obviously takes into account the works of a righteous person.

The quote from King David is from Ps 32.1-2 where happiness (*makarios*) derives from knowing that iniquities are forgiven, *anomia* meaning to be without law (*nomos*). “For just as you once yielded your members to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now yield your members to righteousness for sanctification” [14.22]. In the verse at hand, *aphiemi* is the verb to forgive noted last in 1.27.

The RSV translation of the Hebrew follows the verse at hand, having the adjective ‘ashry for blessed, the very first word of the Psalter, and connotes being in a state of transition, of

constant movement. It is used with regard to two failings, transgression and sin, *pesah* and *chata'ah*. The former is forgiven or *nasa'* which means to raise whereas the latter is covered or *kasah*, to cover in the sense of putting on something. A transgression is wiped out, but a sin is concealed; it thus remains present though not manifest.

The RSV translation of vs. 2 from the psalm runs: "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputes no iniquity and in whose spirit there is no deceit." It has a second instance of 'ashry, this time with regard to a person without iniquity and deceit, *hawon* and *remyah*. As in Ps 1.1, 'ashry is defined negatively as in vs. 1 of this psalm: "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked." The Lord doesn't impute *hawon* in a person whereas *remyah* is simply not present in him. Perhaps this is because the psalmist is speaking of a person's *ruach* which is akin to the divine *Ruah*, Spirit.

4-Vss. 9-10: Is this blessing pronounced only upon the circumcised or also upon the uncircumcised? We say that faith was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness. 10) How then was it reckoned to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after but before he was circumcised.

Paul answers his first rhetorical question in the same breath. The fact of being *makarios*/'ashry can be overlooked within the context of divine righteousness and needs to be emphasized more than it is. The verb "pronounced" is lacking in the Greek text.

Paul brings up the distinction between circumcised and uncircumcised discussed last in 3.30 and leaves it unresolved for now, bringing up the fact of Abraham's faith = righteousness or *pistis = dikaiosune*. As noted in the last verse, *logizomai* as reckoned is the key, recognition of which is vital for a person to know where he stands with regard to all this talk about circumcision or the lack of it.

The context of these two verses is Gen 15.6 quoted in 4.3 as follows: "And he believed the Lord; and he reckoned it to him as righteousness." This follows Abram (as he was still known) when the Lord bade him to leave his tent and count the stars which, if he could, would equal his descendants. In other words, the Lord appears to Abram at night and conveys this righteousness to him.

4-Vss. 11-12: He received circumcision as a sign or seal of the righteousness which he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised and who thus have righteousness reckoned to them 12) and likewise the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but also follow the example of the faith which our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

These two verses center around Chapter Seventeen of Genesis although the text does not say anything about the identity of the person who had circumcised Abraham. Vs. 11 presents it as a sign or seal, a *semeion* or *sphragis* which are dependent upon *pistis* or faith. Both, however, are concealed or not to be made public. For *semeion*, see 1Cor 1.22: “For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom.” For *sphragis*, see 1Cor 9.2: “For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.” In the verse at hand, both are present by reason of Abram’s faith when he was not circumcised, hearkening back to the Gen 15.6 quote which took place in a vision during the night (cf. vs. 1).

Paul says that when Abram was ninety-nine years old (cf. Gen 17.1) he became the father of all who believe (*pisteuo*, cf. vs. 5), those who are circumcised and those who are not. This is conditioned by Abram needing to walk before the Lord while blameless or *tamym*. The last person to be called *tamym* is Noah: “blameless in his generation” [6.9] or prior to the flood and construction of the ark. Note the emphasis upon walking which is “before me” or literally “to my face” (*lepanay*). Two predecessors, Noah and Enoch, had walked with God, examples of intimate companionship in imitation of the Lord walking in the garden of Eden, 3.8 where it was a matter of the “sound of the Lord God walking.” As for this walking, the verse at hand has it as *stoicheo*, literally as to proceed in a row or go in order, not unlike soldiers. “If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit” [Ga. 5.25].

As for the capital importance of faith, it stems all the way back to the call of Abram in Chapter Twelve of Genesis when he left his native country to a land he didn’t know.

4-Vs. 13: The promise to Abraham and his descendants, that they should inherit the world, did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith.

Epaggelia is the noun for promise which also means a command, summons or announcement. It consists of the root *aggello* (to bear a message) prefaced with the preposition *epi-*, upon...to bear a message upon, if you will. “In order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs” [15.8]. In the verse at hand, the message is applicable first to Abraham and those who trace their roots to him, *sperma* meaning seed. “To your descendants I will give this land” [Gen 12.7]. In this verse ‘*erets* or land is involved whereas vs. 13 has the world or *kosmos* (cf. 3.19). The former suggests a more specified place vis-a-vis Gentiles, for example, whereas the latter is the world at large and can involve the heavens as well; i.e., the universe. In sum, we have an expansion from the limited though divinely appointed ‘*erets* to the all-inclusive *kosmos*. However, the former is often associated with the divine which makes it far larger than the latter.

With respect to the land or *'erets* (which in Paul's eyes becomes the *kosmos*), the noun *kleronomos* is used meaning a heir found in the next verse. Being such an heir is more appealing to Paul's audience in Rome, for they were members of the diaspora and not living in the *'erets*.

As for the noun descendants or *sperma*, cf. 9.7: "And not all are children of Abraham because they are his descendants."

God's promise to Abraham which in effect extends to the present generation of Jews has its source in (*dia* or through) the righteousness or *dikaiosune* (cf. vs. 9) proper to faith, not in the *dia* or through the law, *nomos* (cf. 3.28). Note that *kleronomos* contains this root...the custom or law related to one chosen, *kleros* meaning a lot.

4-Vss. 14-15: If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. 15) For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression.

Again *kleronomos* or inheritors of the *nomos* (that play on words again in both words) is mentioned, that is, every generation from Abraham to the present. The preposition *ek* (from) is used for adherents...literally, "those from the law."

While Paul sees nothing bad in this relationship which had endured for so long and is applicable to his audience, he uses rather strong language to show the alternative which may have turned off some of those at Rome. Anyway, it was gamble worth taking. For Paul both faith and the promise (*epaggelia*, cf. vs. 13) are null and void or *kenoo* and *katargeo*. The former means to empty as in 1Cor 1.7: "Lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power." As for the latter, it's found last in 3.31 as overthrow.

As for the *nomos*/Torah, it effects (*katargeo*) wrath, *orge* (cf. 3.5). One such example may be found relative to the golden calf incident, the Lord's response in Ex 32.0-10 being recorded as "And the Lord said to Moses, "I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stiff-necked people; now therefore let me alone that my wrath (*orge*: **LXX** translation) may burn hot against them and I may consume them; but of you I will make a great nation."

It seems that by reason of numerous regulations the *nomos*/Torah offers opportunities for transgression or *parabasis* where as noted in 2.23, the preposition *para-* as beside suggests being outside the law or in its vicinity without subjection to it. Obviously something better has to take the place of *nomos*/Torah which is faith, that being in Jesus Christ which Paul is attempting to convey.

4-Vss. 16: That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants—not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham, for he is the father of us all, 17) as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations"—in the presence of the God in whom he believed who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

“It” refers to the promise or *epaggelia* (cf. vs. 14) which has, if you, three steps: it literally comes “from (*ek*) faith,” rests upon grace or *charis* (cf. 4.4 as gift) with the preposition *kata*, in accord with and finally is guaranteed which is rendered as *bebaios* or firm, steady, with the phrase *eis to einai* (literally, ‘into the to be’). In sum, the prepositional sequence is *ek->kata->eis*. “All his descendants” is rendered as in vs. 13, “to every seed.”

The outline just presented applies both to those who follow the *nomos*/Torah and those who don’t. This is rendered by a “double *ek*:" from the law and from faith. Regardless of which *ek* applies, Abraham remains the father or source of faith in the Lord.

To back up what he has just said, Paul quotes from Gen 17.5 which reads in full: “No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations.” Paul makes no mention of the importance of this change of names so late in life for Abram. It boils down to no longer being called “exalted father” or ‘*av* (father) + *ram* (lifted high, from *ramah*) to ‘*av* (father) of a multitude, *raham*; similar to *hamah* with regard to vs. 4, “*hamon* of nations.”

The new name or title was done in God’s presence, *katenanti* meaning over against (*kata*-) or opposite as in 2Cor 2.17: “But as men of sincerity as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ.” Due to Abraham’s advanced age at the time of this name change, Paul throws in the observation that God gives life (*zoopoieo*: cf. 8.11) to the dead and calls into being what doesn’t have existence (*ta me onta*) or “calling the no being as being.”

4-Vs. 18: In hope he believed against hope that he should become the father of many nations; as he had been told, "So shall your descendants be."

Elpis or hope here has two prepositions, *para* and *epi* or beside and upon, that is, with regard to Abraham’s expectation which is during his advanced years, the verb *pisteuo* (to believe, cf. vs. 11) being used. “We rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God” [5.2].

The quote Paul borrows comes from Gen 15.5 which runs in full as: “No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations.” The Hebrew for the verb to look is *navat* which applies to having

regard or respect. Also note that in vs. 1 the Lord appears to Abram in a vision after which he tells him to exit his tent and look at the sky. Perhaps Abram didn't do this physically but within the context of this vision where it was far sharper than looking at the stars. In this instance he could have counted the stars without effort, each one representing a descendant or *sperma* seed (cf. vs. 13).

4-Vs. 19: He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body which was as good as dead because he was about a hundred years old or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb.

This verse reflects Gen 17.17: "Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed and said to himself, 'Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?'"

Astheneo is the verb for weaken and also means to be sick, here with respect to *pistis* or faith (cf. vs. 11). "For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do" [8.3]. Abram's trust remained constant at the same time he considered his hundred year old self, *katanoeo* being the verb also meaning to perceive: *kata* or according to prefaced to *noeo* or to perceive chiefly with the eyes. This *katanoeo* is also directed toward his wife Sarah, more specifically, that she was barren at ninety years of age.

Hede or "as good as" also means already, something that has been done in the past which is certainly true of Abram's advanced age. *Nekroo* is the verb for barrenness which also means to kill or to die. "Put to death therefore what is earthly in you" [Col 3.5].

4-Vss. 20-22: No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, 21) fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. 22) That is why his faith was "reckoned to him as righteousness."

Diakrino is the verb for waver, literally as to judge through (*dia-*) and suggests the act of looking at something from every angle possible, almost too much so. "For he who has doubts is condemned" [14.23]. Such judging-through, if you will, pertains to the divine promise (*epaggelia*, cf. vs. 16), this word having the preposition *eis*, literally as "into the promise."

Also the noun *apistia* is found here but not translated meaning no or lack of faith (cf. 3.3). Instead of this *apistia*, Abram grew strong in *pistis*, *endunamoo* connoting being empowered, the preposition *en-* or in which is used as a preface. "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might" [Eph 6.10]. Such strengthening-in enabled the patriarch to glorify God, *doxa* being the noun (cf. 3.23).

Plerophoreo is the verb for fully convinced which consists of the root *phoreo* (to bear, to carry) prefaced with the adjective *pleros* or full. “Let everyone be fully convinced in his own mind” [14.5]. The idea is that Abram somehow possessed in essence knowledge of all that God was to effect through him, that is, to trust in his capacity to carry out (*poieo*: cf. 3.8) what he was capable of, *dunatos*, this adjective connoting being powerful or capable to see something to the end. “Desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power” [9.22]. In the verse at hand such *dunatos* is related direction to the divine promise or *epaggelia*.

Paul quotes from Gen 15.6 which reads in full as (and quoted in 4.9): “And he believed the Lord; and he reckoned it to him as righteousness.” So here Paul equates Abram’s faith as righteousness (*dikaiosune*, cf. vs. 13) which rests on divine *dunatos* mediated, if you will, by the equally divine *logizomai* or reckoned (cf. 4.10).

4-Vss. 23-25: But the words, "it was reckoned to him" were written not for his sake alone 24) but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him that raised from the dead Jesus our Lord 25) who was put to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

Paul comes back to *logizomai* or reckoned as in the previous verse first noted in 2.3 as supposing which connotes the making of an assumption. Here it concerns Abram. Both vs. 23 and vs. 24 have this supposing related to him as well as to the current generation, more specifically Paul’s audience at Rome. This *logizomai* therefore is connects to the two parties through the preposition *dia* or through: through him and through us. Surely when the Lord showed Abram his descendants would be like the stars in their multitude he was aware this wasn’t for him alone.

At the end of the chapter dealing with righteousness and its source in Abraham Paul brings up the person of Jesus Christ, his chief concern. He had to introduce him gradually because without such preparation by appealing to Israel’s roots, Paul would be dismissed more or less immediately. He speaks not only of Jesus’ death but resurrection, *egeiro*. “So that as Christ was raised from the dead...we too might walk in newness of life” [6.4]. The noun *dikaiosis* is found here with the preposition *dia*, one of two NT references, the other being in 5.18. However, this is preceded by Jesus’ death for our collective trespass or *paraptoma* which connotes making a false step or blunder. “But the free gift is not like the trespass” [5.15]. Note the preposition *para-* prefaced to the root (a falling-beside or nearby) as well as in the verb *paradidomai* which means to hand over (cf. 1.28).